CHAPTER I
A BRIEF PERSONAL AND POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY OF KAMARAJ

EARLY LIFE

Kumaraswami Kamaraj was born on July 15, 1903 in a middle class Nadar family at Virudupatti, a small village situated forty-eight kilometers South of Madurai in Madras Presidency. His parents were Kumaraswami and Sivakamiammal. Kamaraj was initially named as Kamatchi in gratitude and reverence to the famous deity. However, later the name was changed to Kamaraj. Two years later a girl was born to the couple and was named Nagammal.

Virudupatti was situated in Ramanathapuram District, which was well known for cotton and tobacco. The leading community of the district was the Nadars. They were staunch Hindus and claimed to be Kshatriyas-Naadalwars (rulers of the land). The village Virudupatti gradually grew as a trade centre of the district and came to be called ‘Virudunagar’.

Kamaraj was, by nature, retired, shy and soft-spoken. In fact he spoke very little unlike the boys of his age. He was sent to school at the age of five and received harsh treatments, like many other boys, from a primary school teacher Velayutham, known as ‘nondi

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vathiyar’ (lame teacher), who did not believe in sparing the rod. Disappointed at Kamaraj’s first such experiences of school, the parents shifted him to Enaditha Nayanar Vidyasala, an elementary school that was run by a person by name Murugayya. Kamaraj learnt here to read and write in Tamil. In the following years he was transferred to Kshatriya Vidayasala, the only high school then in Virudupatti.

This school was known as ‘pidi arisi’ (hand full of rice) school since the school had started to offer free education, by Nadar community, and each family in Virudunagar contributed a hand full of rice for providing meals at the school. Kamaraj was enrolled in the school in academic year 1910-11.

In the same year, for the occasion of ‘vinayaka chathurthi’, the yearly celebration for the elephant God, every pupil in his class had contributed some amount of money (about 9 Paise) for the celebrations. At the end of the day’s celebrations ‘prasadam’ (eatables offered to the God) was distributed to all pupils, however, Kamaraj managed to receive a very little portion of it and returned home. When his grandmother asked him why the prasadam was so less, he explained that his contribution was exactly same as others but since he was not interested in crowding around the teacher who distributed the prasadam, he got only a little of it. He further argued

that the problem was with the teacher since he was responsible for sharing the prasadam equally to all who had contributed equally.\(^8\)

Another interesting incident that happened of about the same period also sheds some light on his early boyhood character. The elephant of the temple of Virudupatti ran out of control on the streets and Kamaraj, like many other, happened to notice it. He observed that the iron chain the elephant used to have on its trunk was missing and rushed back to the temple to bring the chain since he expected the elephant could psychologically be controlled at the sight of the chain. He was correct and the elephant came to a control. Another reason was that the mahout Mariappa Thevar and Kamaraj had gained acquaintance with each other previously and the face of Kamaraj thus could have been more familiar to the elephant.\(^9\)

**TURNING POINTS**

**Responsibilities to Family**

The year 1911 rather turned out quite calamitous for young Kamaraj. Kamaraj’s grandfather Chinnappa Nadar passed away on First of July and within four months Kamaraj’s father passed away on October 16. The income of the family came to a sudden and shocking halt as both the earning members of the family had demised within a very short span of time and the family was left only women and children. Kamaraj and his sister were in their age of eight and six respectively and their mother did not have any source of income for the family.\(^10\)

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Though Karuppaiah, Kamaraj’s maternal uncle, came forward to help the family, Kamaraj’s mother Sivakamiammal was not willing to accept the help as she considered depending on others to run the family was not the right thing. She sold all her jewels for Rs.3000 and invested the money in with a trustable local trader. The interest of the investment helped the family with Rs.30 per month and she managed well with this meager sum\textsuperscript{11} and also hoped that the family could survive until the completion of Kamaraj’s elementary school. She also expected Kamaraj, upon completion of his primary schooling, to join his uncle’s cloth business to support the family.\textsuperscript{12}

Kamaraj was not showing much interest in studies and his teacher Sargunam advised him quite often how important it was for him to study well, citing his family’s tough economic position. However the preaching did not bring any significant changes in young Kamaraj in terms of academic performance, in fact, it got worse. The prime distraction for Kamaraj from studies was the interest in learning about freedom struggle of India and his teacher even noticed that Kamaraj often talked to fellow students about Gandhi and his Satyagraha, even at that tender age.\textsuperscript{13}

Soon after the pressure on young Kamaraj mounted, to earn for supporting the family, he joined as an apprentice at his uncle Karuppaiah’s cloth shop in 1914. While working in the cloth shop at Virudupatti, Kamaraj had developed an interest in the national

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\textsuperscript{13} A. Sargunam, \textit{Enadhu Manavar Kamaraj (My Student Kamaraj)}, (Madras : Kamaraj 60\textsuperscript{th} Birthday Commemoration Volume, 1962), p.1.
\end{flushleft}
politics by when he was a regular reader of daily newspapers.\textsuperscript{14} During the same time he was also interested in joining the ‘Bhajans’ (songs in praise of the Lord) on Lord Muruga and had become a member of the team organised by Kandasamy Pulavar, a devotee of Lord Muruga. As a young boy he was quite interested in physical exercises. He regularly practiced ‘silambam’ (a type of martial arts and exercise that is practiced with long sticks) and boxing.\textsuperscript{15}

**Joining The Congress Party**

Kamaraj’s interest on Indian freedom struggle had intensified during the cloth shop days through posters of ‘Vande Matharam’ activists and from speeches of freedom fighters like V.O.Chidambaram, Subramanya Siva, Subramanya Bharathi, etc., It was on April 01, 1915; Gandhi came from South Africa back to India to participate in the freedom struggle.\textsuperscript{16} Kamaraj’s mounting interests on politics and stand against British for freedom of nation worried his mother and she decided to send him away from Virudunagar so that his political connections will get severed.

Kamaraj was sent to another uncle Kasinadar’s timber shop in Trivandrum and the mother strongly believed that his son’s freedom movement involvement would come to an end. It was there in Vaikom, a village near Trivandrum, Kamaraj participated in E. V. Ramasamy’s (E.V.R) struggle against the prohibition of lower caste people’s entry in to temples. Eventually, since Kamaraj’s uncle could


not control the activities of Kamaraj beyond the scope of timber shop, he sent him back to Virudunagar.  

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, a tragedy at which over a thousand people were killed at a gathering against the Rowlatt Act that had harsh measures for controlling the nationalist movements, in Amritsar, Punjab happened on April 13, 1919. The tragedy sent strong waves of shock and resentment across the country.

When Kamaraj learned the details of the massacre, it disturbed him so much and he started thinking deeply about participating in freedom struggle more actively. Soon after the massacre, prominent leaders of Congress Party started to spread the details of the tragedy through their speeches across the country and Kamaraj happened to listen to speeches of George Joseph, Lakshmana Pillai and Satyamurthi at Virudunagar. Among all of them Satyamurthi attracted Kamaraj and on the same day Kamaraj met him. These incidents of Jallainwala Bagh and subsequent meeting with Satyamurthi turned the life of Kamaraj once for all.

By then the First World War had already ended and India had supported British Government in the War. However after the war no sign of favour was shown from British towards the freedom of India. The disappointment together with bitterness of Jallianwala Bagh further intensified the freedom movements. People revolt and Satyagraha (non-violent protest devised by Gandhi) became more acute and the British Government began to control the protests.

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aggressively by arresting the leaders of Congress Party. People of India, especially the youth, rose against the control of British and Kamaraj was no exception.\textsuperscript{19} He joined the Congress Party in 1919\textsuperscript{20} and he readily responded to Gandhi’s Non-Cooperation Movement. Kamaraj was then just eighteen years old.\textsuperscript{21}

**Decision to remain a Bachelor for life**

During this time, Kamaraj’s mother tried to get his only son married to his sister Nagammal’s eldest daughter Mangalam. The mother’s interest was to divert his son’s interest and activities in freedom fighting by tying him with the burden of starting a family. However, Kamaraj firmly refused and declared that he had no slightest idea of getting married or starting a family but decided to dedicate his life to free India. Kamaraj’s mother was shocked but did not compel her son right away as she believed the time would bring changes to his decision. After a year she tried to convince Kamaraj to marry Nagammal’s another daughter Kamala Devi. Kamaraj refused firmly, again.\textsuperscript{22}

To make his stand clear once and for all, he offered his mother and family with two choices that they would have to either forget about his marriage or forget about him. Kamaraj’s mother did not insist on his marriage thereafter and he remained a bachelor for whole of his life.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22} Personal interview with Kamala Devi, daughter of Nagammal (sister of Kamaraj), at Virudunagar on 16th July 2009
Meeting with Gandhi

Kamaraj for the first time met Gandhi on September 21, 1921, after two years from his joining in the Congress Party. Gandhi was on his visit to Madurai, as a part of his broader tour across India to gather people’s support for the Satyagraha and freedom movements. After Gandhi’s address to public in Madurai, Kamaraj met him that night at the place where Gandhi had stayed.\textsuperscript{24}

That meeting had energised Kamaraj even stronger than before in freedom fighting and subsequently he arranged many public addresses and conferences to national leaders to spread the need of freedom of nation among the masses.\textsuperscript{25}

Early Positions in Congress Party

In 1922, Kamaraj was elected as a member of Madras Presidency Congress Party at a conference held at Sattur Taluk that was led by E.V.Ramasamy. Kamaraj was also the secretary of Inauguration Committee for this conference.\textsuperscript{26} Subsequently in 1923, he led the picketing of toddy shops at Madurai but he was not arrested in the protest.\textsuperscript{27}

FREEDOM STRUGGLE AND POLITICAL ASCENSION

Flag Satyagraha

British Government had banned, in 1923, the carrying of Indian National Congress’ flag in Nagpur residential areas. Congress Party announced Flag Satyagraha against this ban and Congress Party members from all over the country were invited to Nagpur to

\textsuperscript{24} G. Balan, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.27.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid.}, p.28.
\textsuperscript{26} Muruga Dhanushkodi, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.27.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.}, p.29.
participate in the protest against the ban. From Tamilnadu, Kamaraj led the efforts and guided supporters to Nagpur. However, before their arrival to Nagpur, the Flag Satyagraha had been withdrawn.²⁸

**Sword Satyagraha**

In 1927, British Government banned the carrying of swords and similar long knives by Indians. Congress Party decided to send a strong signal to the British against the ban. Sword Satyagraha was begun on June 16, 1927.²⁹

Kamaraj and his friend K.S.Muthusamy of Virudunagar assisted the Satyagrahis by supplying them with half a dozen swords.³⁰ Kamaraj also organised a procession in Virudunagar and his plan was to extend the procession to Madurai. At the procession Kamaraj went along with singing the patriotic songs of Bharathi (famous nationalist Tamil poet of the State)³¹.

**Neill Satyagraha**

General James George Smith Neill, who was known for his cruel killing of India soldiers in Sepoy Mutiny 1857, had been given honour by erecting a statue for him at Mount Road, Chennai in 1860.³² On October 11, 1927, an agitation was launched by the Madras Congress Party to remove the Neill Statue.

³² Inscription depicted below Neill Statue, Connemara Museum, Chennai.
Gandhi had given his consent for the proposal and emphasised the activities should be limited to throwing of small clay balls to indicate the hatred that people of India have for Neill. However, many leaders including Somayajulu and Srinivasa Varadhan succeeded in breaking a portion of the sheath of the sword carried by Neill and hoisting the national flag on it. Eventually the Neill statue was removed after a decade, in 1937, and placed in Connemara museum.

**Meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru**

The 43rd annual session of Indian National Congress was scheduled in Tamilnadu. In 1927, the session happened near Egmore, Chennai at the place ‘Erikarai Thidal’. Dr. Ansari was the president of the session and Kamaraj participated on behalf of Tamilnadu Congress Party. Nehru was on Europe tour and he came to attend the session with his family from the tour. In his address he explained the details of complete freedom, self-governance, and war threats amongst other important issues. Proposals were made on all these issues and were unanimously agreed by the Party. Kamaraj met Nehru there for the first time, together with Satyamurthi, and managed to ensure Nehru’s presence for a conference he was arranging at his hometown Virudunagar.

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Simon Go Back

Indian Statutory Commission (commonly known as Simon Commission after its chairman Sir John Simon) constituted by British Government, was strongly opposed by Congress Party as the Commission did not have any representatives from India. Nehru was already in action supporting the protests against the Commission. On February 18, 1929, the Simon Commission arrived at High Court premises in Madras\(^{38}\) and March 01, 1929 to Madurai\(^{39}\). Kamaraj had arranged and organised thousands of Congress Party members for showing plaques with inscriptions of “SIMON GO BACK”.

Salt Satyagraha and First Jail Term

In 1930, Gandhi took Dandi March to defy salt law. In Tamilnadu, Rajaji led the Salt Satyagraha with volunteers from Tiruchi to Vedaranyam in Thanjavur district.\(^ {40}\) Kamaraj gathered and guided the volunteers for the march and got arrested. On June 09, 1930, he was given two years of imprisonment and sent to Alipuram Jail.\(^ {41}\) However, he was released from jail after Gandhi-Irwin Pact on March 12, 1931.\(^ {42}\) This was the first imprisonment in his political career.

Getting in to Working Committee

The provincial meeting of the Congress Party was held in Madurai in 1931 under the chairmanship of Satyamurthi. Kamaraj was elected as a member of the Working Committee to represent

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\(^ {38}\) G. Balan, *Varalatril Vaazhum Sadhanai Sandrorgal*, (Chennai: Vanathi Publishers, 2009), p290
\(^ {39}\) *Kamaraj (1903 – 1975)* Pamphlet (Chennai: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Dec 1986)
\(^ {41}\) *Jail Slips J. 316, J. 626*, Ramanathapuram District, TNA, Chennai
\(^ {42}\) Ibid.
Ramanathapuram and that could be considered as the first important official key position Kamaraj held in Tamilnadu Congress Party.\textsuperscript{43}

**Break of Gandhi-Irwin Pact and Second Jail Term**

Gandhi-Irwin Pact turned out unsuccessful and Gandhi returned, disappointed, from Second Round-Table Conference that was held in London, 1931. Though Kamaraj did not act against the prohibitory orders, the British Government anticipated trouble and arrested Kamaraj in 1931. He was sent to Vellore Jail.\textsuperscript{44} He was released on January 09, 1933\textsuperscript{45} after serving his second term Jail tenure.

**False Accusations**

Despite his strong adherence to non-violence principles, at least on two occasions Kamaraj was attempted to be accused by the Police for connections with acts of violence.

In 1933, Kamaraj was attempted to be arrested for planning to murder the Governor Sir John Anderson. He was accused of arranging a revolver. But he could not be arrested as no evidence suggested his presence at the station where the plan was carried out as per the approver’s statement. Later the case was proven to be a false accusation by T.Prakasam, lawyer of the case on behalf of Kamaraj. Another occasion was to charge Kamaraj, together with his friends Muthusamy and Mariappa, with an attempt to bomb Virudunagar Police Station. Lawyer George joseph proved that the case was baseless and falsely charged by the Police.\textsuperscript{46}

General Secretary of Tamilnadu Congress Committee (TNCC)

In 1936, the contest between Sathyamurthi and C.N.Muthuranga Mudaliyar for the post of President of TNCC had resulted in the victory of Sathyamurthi, with the support of Rajaji. After Sathyamurthi was elected as President, he chose Kamaraj as General Secretary. His appointment as General Secretary of TNCC provided him the opportunity to accompany Nehru on his tour to Tamilnadu in 1936. Nehru was impressed by Kamaraj’s ability for organising and his dedication to Congress Party.

Member of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A)

In 1937, Kamaraj was elected as a Member of Legislative Assembly, one of the members of Sattur Double Member Constituency, Ramanathapuram district, without any opposition. Though Kamaraj was not well received by Sattur people initially, they very soon realised the potentials of Kamaraj and his dedication to serve them. His opponent from Justice Party, Ramasamy, realising the masses were with Kamaraj, withdrew his nomination that resulted in unopposed election of Kamaraj. Though the Justice Party nominee withdrew, the poll still went on and Kamaraj had secured 35,927 votes.

President of Tamilnadu Congress Committee (TNCC)

In 1940, Tamilnadu Congress President Elections, both Sathyamurthi and Rajaji groups were convinced, based on reflections of the grass roots, that the President to be elected should be a non-

47 A. K. Navaneetha Krishnan, Mudalamaichar Kamarajar (Kamaraj as Chief Minister), (Chennai: V. M. Publications, 2009), p.52.
Brahmin. Initially Rajaji had convinced Satyamurthi on his suggestion of C.P.Suppiah as candidate for President of TNCC. However, Kamaraj firmly refused mentioning that he had nothing personal against Suppiah, but he preferred someone from Sathyamurthi supporters like Muniswamy Pillai, Rukmani Lakshmipathy or Kumaraswamy Raja.⁵²

Eventually, Rajaji and Muthuranga Mudaliyar supported Suppiah and Satyamurthi supported Kamaraj for President. Kamaraj secured a marginal victory by gaining 103 votes against Suppiah who had got 100 votes. Kamaraj, at his age of thirty seven, became the president of TNCC. Satyamurthi had no hesitation to work as a General Secretary. The relationship between Satyamurthi and Kamaraj was beyond their titles in the Party. From then until 1954, for fourteen years, Kamaraj remained as President of TNCC.⁵³

**Individual Satyagraha and Third Jail Term**

In October 1940 Gandhi had started individual Satyagraha after the horrible experiences in the past where multitudes of Satyagrahis experienced violent treatments, which had resulted in mass casualties, by the British Government.

Kamaraj was arrested on December 20, 1940 when he was on his way to Wardha, to secure the approval of Gandhi in the selection of individual Satyagrahis, under the defense of India rules for speeches opposing contribution to Second World War fund.⁵⁴ He was

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elected as Chairman of Virudunagar Municipal Council during his jail term. This was his third jail term. After nine months of his election as Chairman, when he was released from jail in November 02, 1941, he submitted his resignation citing his duties to the Congress Party.\textsuperscript{55}

**Quit India Movement and Fourth Jail Term**

On August 08, 1942, the All India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C) that convened at Bombay passed the Quit India resolution. Gandhi wanted all his Congress men to actively get involved in this new movement with a never before stronger slogan, ‘Do or Die’.\textsuperscript{56}

The resolution was proposed by Nehru. He stated that India’s self-respect could not be auctioned and also called for an eternal struggle until freedom. Sardar Vallabhai Patel, who was later known as Iron Man of India, seconded the proposal.\textsuperscript{57}

On his way from Bombay to Tamilnadu, after participating in the A.I.C.C. meet, Kamaraj managed to escape the Police security that had been tightened at all the railway stations from Bombay to Madras to arrest all those Congress Party leaders who had taken part in the meet. He went to the house of his friend and State Congress Committee member K.R.Kalyanarama Iyer’s house.\textsuperscript{58}

Kamaraj explained to him that he had to organise for the Quit India movement by meeting his Party men at Thanjavur, Tiruchi, Madurai and Tirunelveli before he get arrested. His friend envisaged that the Police may smell his presence at his residence and thus shifted Kamaraj to his friend Janab Mohammed Sulaiman’s out-

house. Kamaraj successfully managed for the whole of next week, travelling to Tirunelveli as per his plan, without getting caught by the Police and meeting the key people to pass the information on the details and methods of protest.⁵⁹

After a week, on August 16, 1942, after completing all the organising work for successful and strong protest for Quit India, the task he had to complete, he called the Police and declared that he was ready to be arrested. Inspector Ezhuthachan met Kamaraj and explained to him that a Police man with arrest warrant had gone to Ariyalur and thus he had no objection to allow Kamaraj to rest for couple of days until the warrant comes back. But Kamaraj, who had already spent above three-thousand days in jail from his earlier three terms, replied that many of his friends had been arrested and he had no pleasure whatsoever to stay out of jail. He further continued that staying in jail gives him more satisfaction than staying out.⁶⁰

That was Kamaraj’s fourth and last time in jail that lasted for almost three years from August 16, 1942 to June 30, 1945. He was transferred to Amarotti jail for two years and then back to Vellore jail for the last year.⁶¹ During these long jail sentences, Kamaraj continued to be the President of T.N.C.C since the elections to all the Congress Party bodies had been suspended during World War II.⁶²

RAJAJI AND KAMARAJ – THE TWO POLES IN CONGRESS

During Kamaraj’s last term in jail, his friend and mentor Satyamurthi, passed away on March 28, 1943. Rajaji was not in favour of Quit India from the beginning and also was in support of separation of Pakistan.

Cripps’ Mission came to India on March 23, to get the support of the people of India. The Mission spoke to all the leaders of Congress Party including Gandhi, Jinnah and Rajaji. The proposal by the Mission was to, eventually, free India and consented on the rejoining of ‘Samasthanams’ (similar to provinces that were ruled by Kings). Congress had rejected this proposal. Jinnah, on April 11, 1942, requested creation of a separate nation ‘Pakistan’ with parts of majority Muslims in the nation and sought the British to split the country in to two and announce free India and free Pakistan. Rajaji supported this proposal and formulated his plan in July 1944 that was known as “Rajaji Plan”.

Most Congress leaders were against Rajaji on this since they did not like the idea of separation and also did not prefer to go against Gandhi. Rajaji resigned from Congress Party’s membership on April 03, 1943 and continued to be stubborn on his stand on both Pakistan issue and Quit India. It was that period where Kamaraj, though in Jail, had remained indispensable to Tamilnadu Congress Party since the two major forces, Satyamuthi and Rajaji, were out of Congress.  

\[63 \text{ A. Gopanna, } \textit{Kamaraj Oru Sagaptham (Kamaraj – An Epoch)}, \text{(Chennai: Nava India Publishers, 2003)}, \text{p.84.} \]
\[64 \text{ G. Balan, } \textit{Op.cit.}, \text{p.19.} \]
Kamaraj’s Release from Jail and Rajaji’s Comeback

Since the Congress Party was banned from 1942, a new organisation by name ‘Congress Sangam’ had been started by Muthuranga Mudaliyar to keep the members intact. Another group under Rajaji’s leadership started ‘First Class Congress Sangam’ for the same purpose. Kamaraj was released from jail, in June 1945.65

By then Rajaji expressed his wishes to rejoin the Congress Party. Gandhi had no reservation to induct Rajaji again in to Congress Party despite Rajaji’s stake on Quit India and Pakistan Separation. Rajaji also suggested a joint-tour with Kamaraj throughout Tamilnadu so that to create the impression to the masses that Rajaji had been formally accepted. Though Kamaraj accepted the arrangement, he postponed the date.66

On March 30, 1945 at Tiruchengodu in Salem, the Congress Committee Secretary announced that Rajaji had been selected as a member of the committee without any opposition.67 Kamaraj reacted to this by raising hot questions on how Rajaji was elected as a member without the knowledge of the President. Kamaraj had staunch supporters for him across the Party and Rajaji attempted to balance this with his influence in the high command of A.I.C.C.

As the conflict between Kamaraj and Rajaji grew intense, the news reached A.I.C.C President Moulana Azad through Aruna Asif Ali and subsequently to Sardar Patel who had the ultimate power to

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65 Extracts from Fortnightly Reports, 1945-47, TNA, Madras
control the Party disputes. Patel contacted Kamaraj and Rajaji for a rapprochement.\textsuperscript{68}

At the end of that, both Rajaji and Kamaraj agreed to have a committee of eight members in the State as Parliamentary Board, which was to contain three members from Rajaji’s nomination and another three members by Kamaraj’s nomination. However, the arrangement indirectly favoured Kamaraj since the remaining two members were himself as President and Vice President who was his supporter.\textsuperscript{69}

**Gandhi’s Visit to Tamilnadu**

Gandhi visited Tamilnadu on January 21, 1946 to take part in the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Dhakshina Bharatha Hindi Prachar Sabha and he toured Tamilnadu for two weeks.\textsuperscript{70} He planned to use that tour, under the disguise of pilgrimage, to establish his support to Rajaji as the conflicts within the Party in the Madras State had become very turbulent.

Gandhi was received by both Rajaji and Kamaraj. Kamaraj accompanied him, as President of T.N.C.C, throughout the tour.\textsuperscript{71} After returning to Wardha, Gandhi wrote in Harijan as follows;

\begin{quote}
"Rajaji is one of my oldest friends and was known to be the best exponent in word and deed of all I stand for. That in 1942 he differed from me. His political wisdom and integrity are beyond
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{68} N. V. Kalaimani, *Op.cit.*, pp.204-205.
question. I was therefore pained to find a clique against him. It is a clique that evidently courts in the official Congress in Madras. But the masses are devoted to Rajaji. I am neither vain nor foolish enough to feel that I could have had the huge public demonstrations all along the route of pilgrimage if he had no influence with the masses in Tamilnadu....But I would be less than loyal to the organisation if I did not warn them against losing the valuable services which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment”.

Kamaraj’s Resignation and Come back

Kamaraj was hurt by the mention of Gandhi as ‘Clique’, referring to those who were against Rajaji, which actually pointed to Kamaraj and his supporters. Kamaraj expressed, on February 12, 1946 that he was deeply affected by the Clique mention by Gandhi.

He also stated that, as head of Tamilnadu Congress Party, Gandhi’s reference could be applicable only to him and he extended his disappointment to Gandhi for not discussing any Party related matters during his visit to Tamilnadu. Kamaraj further stated that neither he nor his colleagues were interested in aspiration of any kind of office, at any rate.

Then he submitted his resignation and added that he would obey the decisions of T.N.C.C and A.I.C.C against his resignation. After this, B. Varadarajulu Naidu wrote a letter to Gandhi explaining what Kamaraj had done to Congress in the past twenty five years and

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72 Harijan, 10th February 1946
his influence over people of the State. Gandhi replied that he would not interfere in the conflicts between Rajaji and Kamaraj anymore.

Pattabhi Seetharamaiah also met Gandhi and explained the caliber of Kamaraj and situation in Tamilnadu Congress in detail. Eventually at the end of it, Rajaji resigned from Congress Party and Kamaraj was elected as the President again.

**KINGMAKER IN THE STATE**

**Post Assembly Elections - 1946**

Kamaraj was elected as an M.L.A from Sattur Constituency again with 30,998 votes in 1946 Assembly Elections. Kamaraj met Gandhi for the discussion on nomination of candidature for Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. Initially Gandhi had either Rajaji or Pattabhi Seetharamaiah for the position in his mind and did not like the nomination of T. Prakasam.

After further discussion, Kamaraj expressed to Gandhi that he would support Pattabhi Seetharamiah and also demanded Rajaji’s support too for him. Gandhi agreed to this arrangement, however, T. Prakasam decided to contest for Chief Ministership. Eventually, T. Prakasam became the Chief Minister of Madras Presidency on April 30, 1946. But in less than a year, no confidence motion was brought upon Prakasam’s leadership and he was voted out. With the

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76 *G.O.No.822, Public (Election), 4th Apr 1946*, p.92.
support of Kamaraj, O.P.Ramasamy Reddiyar assumed power as Chief Minister of the State on March 23, 1947.\textsuperscript{78}

\textbf{India’s Attainment of Freedom and Assassination of Gandhi}

British Prime Minister Atlee announced Mountbatten as Viceroy of India to transfer the power completely to India before June 01, 1948.\textsuperscript{79} Subsequently, Mountbatten discussed with leaders of the Congress Party, Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Patel, Azad, etc., and the decision was made to split India in to India and Pakistan. On August 15, 1947, Mountbatten transferred the power to India and raised India’s tri-coloured flag instead of Union-Jack.\textsuperscript{80}

Gandhi was occupied in his attempts to stop the communal riots that had broken out in the aftermath of split of Pakistan when his colleagues of freedom struggle and the people of India were basking in the glory of freedom of India. Gandhi was shot dead on January 30, 1948 at 5.17P.M and the news shocked Kamaraj radically.\textsuperscript{81}

\textbf{Kamaraj and Rajaji Together}

On April 06, 1949, Kumarasamy Raja assumed power as Chief Minister of Madras Presidency succeeding O.P.Ramasamy Reddiyar. Kamaraj was instrumental in his election.\textsuperscript{82} It was during his tenure India attained the Republic Status on January 26, 1950. On August 29, 1950, Kamaraj was elected as President of T.N.C.C for the fourth

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p.2.
\textsuperscript{81} M. Ilangoovan, Kamrasar Kaaviyam (Epic of Kamaraj), (Chennai: Murugan Publications, 2001), p.153
\textsuperscript{82} Ananda Vikatan, Weekly, March 30, 2011, p.68.
time. The first time was in 1940, second time in 1946 and the third time was in 1948. By this time he had already been the President for a decade.

According to the 1950 Constitution, free India had its first General Election in 1952. Though Congress was single largest Party, it did not secure absolute majority in the election, securing 152 out of 375 Constituencies in the State. Despite Kamaraj’s opinion, the United Democratic Front (U.D.F), which had been formed by Communist initiatives with more than six different Parties to make up the majority, leaders like T.T.Krishnamachari wanted Rajaji to become the head of the ministry.

Kamaraj agreed to the proposal and expressed his support to Rajaji. However he resigned his position as President of T.N.C.C for two reasons; first is to own the responsibility, as President, for the Congress not securing a majority in the elections and the second is to free up the position of President to someone who could cooperate well with Rajaji.

P. Subbarayan was elected as President of T.N.C.C, succeeding Kamaraj’s resignation, on April 30, 1952. However he could not manage his responsibilities as head of T.N.C.C. and laid down office, after just eight months, on December 26, 1952. Kamaraj was once again chosen as President of T.N.C.C on the same day, for the fifth time. Thus Kamaraj as President of T.N.C.C and Rajaji as

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86 Ibid.
leader of Congress Legislative Party (C.L.P) worked together for the next two years until April 1954.\textsuperscript{87}

\textbf{Fall of Rajaji}

Though Rajaji proved as an efficient administrator of food crisis and managing communists, few of his decisions and comments raised his own Party members and public against him. First he suggested that Congress must be dissolved since the purpose of Congress was to achieve freedom to India.\textsuperscript{88} Further, as a measure of rigorous cost reduction, he passed orders that Congress ‘Thyagis’ – who had fought for freedom during the struggle – should not have land allotments as it was against Gandhi’s principles of not increasing personal assets.\textsuperscript{89} Besides, he had shown some favoritism for Brahmins by reappointing Brahmins who were already retired from service for many positions. Even his ministers were disappointed with these decisions.\textsuperscript{90}

The culmination came when he introduced New Elementary Education Scheme without widespread discussions with educationists and even without consulting his education minister. The issue of implementation of the policy reached a point where Rajaji had to choose between giving up his scheme and renouncing his Chief Ministership. Finally, he resigned, stating that the rejection of his scheme is actually equivalent to the rejection of himself, on May 25, 1954.\textsuperscript{91}

At that time of Rajaji’s resignation, Madras Presidency did not have Andhra Pradesh as the language based split of the Presidency had resulted in a separate State of Andhra Pradesh. Initially Madras City had been planned to be attached to Andhra Pradesh, but Rajaji and Kamaraj were successful in convincing Nehru and Shastri on retaining Madras with Tamilnadu.92

KAMARAJ AS CHIEF MINISTER OF THE STATE

At the time of Rajaji’s resignation, Kamaraj was the President of T.N.C.C. and also a Member of Parliament from Srivilliputhur Parliamentary Constituency in first General Elections of 1952. Kamaraj had secured 46.77% of votes against G.D.Naidu (independent contender) who had secured 34.73% votes.93 The vacuum created by Rajaji, it was felt among the Party, could be better filled with Kamaraj as Chief Minister. When Kamaraj was approached by Varadarajulu Naidu, he refused initially and later reluctantly agreed upon realising the respect and confidence the Party leaders and his colleagues had for him.94 C.Subramaniam contested his election as Chief Minister but secured only 41 votes against Kamaraj who had secured 93 votes.95

First Cabinet - 1954

Kamaraj, before assuming power, emphasised that he would agree to deliver his duties as Chief Minister if, and only if, the Party members and the Legislative Assembly members could promise that

they would never approach him for any favour. Kamaraj’s first cabinet was sworn in on the Tamil New Year day of April 13, 1954. His first cabinet contained only seven ministers, excluding him.

Their respective portfolios were as follows:

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98 *Commemoration Issue of New Legislative Assembly Secretariat*, (Ministry of Information and Publicity, TNA, Chennai, 2010), p.238.
Table No. 1 – Portfolio details of Kamaraj’s First Cabinet - 1954

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Cabinet Minister</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K.Kamaraj</td>
<td>Chief Minister in charge of Public and Police in the Home Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.B.Shetty</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Medical and Public Health, Co-operation, Housing and Ex-servicemen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Bakthavatsalam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries, Cinchona, Rural Welfare, Community Projects, National Extension Scheme, Women’s Welfare, Industries and Labour and Veterinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.Subramaniam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Finance, Food, Education, and Information and Publicity and Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.Manickavelu</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Land Revenue and Commercial Taxes and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathi</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Public Works, Accommodation Control, Engineering Colleges, Stationary and Printing including Establishment questions of the Stationary Department and the Government Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Parameswaran</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Transport, Harijan Uplift, Hindu Religious Endowments, Registration and Prohibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S.Ramasamy Padayachi</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Local Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This first cabinet lasted for three years until March 13, 1957. It can also be noted that C.Subramaniam who contested Kamaraj’s leadership as Chief Minister, was given the important cabinet
ministries of Finance, Education and Law. Kamaraj had reduced the size of the cabinet, from twelve under Rajaji, to eight. Besides, apart from including the supporters of Rajaji like C.Subramaniam in the ministry he had also exercised due care not to include those who strongly opposed Rajaji. This approach calmed the supporters of Rajaji in the Party. He had also included Ramasamy Padayachi, who had strong views against Congress, in the cabinet.99

When Kamaraj was sworn in as Chief Minister, he was not an M.L.A. He did not exercise the easy backdoor entry by becoming a Member of Legislative Council (M.L.C.) but wanted to be elected by people directly. At the same time, he did not prefer the M.L.A. of Virudunagar to resign in order for him to contest the familiar constituency.

Gudiyatham Constituency, in North Arcot district, did not have an M.L.A. at that point and Kamaraj decided to contest there. His campaign was successful in getting the support of the people. Except for the Communists, no other Parties raised against Kamaraj. Kamaraj was also supported by Dravidar Kazhagam (D.K.) and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (D.M.K.) and articles were written in favour of Kamaraj in the dailies by the leaders of these Parties.100 As a result, Kamaraj managed a mass victory by securing 64,334 votes against the Communist contester K. Kothandaraman who had secured 26,132 votes.101

Second Cabinet - 1957

Kamaraj contested in 1957 General Elections of Madras State at Sattur Constituency and elected as an M.L.A by securing 36,400 votes against his opponent 31,683 votes.\(^{102}\)

Congress Party in the State had won the majority with 151 seats out of 205\(^{103}\) and Kamaraj sworn in as Chief Minister for the second consecutive time on April 13, 1957. His second cabinet ministry also had seven ministers, same as to the first one, with some changes in the ministers and their key portfolio, as follows;\(^{104}\)

Table No. 2 - Portfolio details of Kamaraj’s Second Cabinet - 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Cabinet Minister</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K.Kamaraj</td>
<td>Chief Minister in charge of Public, Planning and Development including Local Development Works, Women’s Welfare, Community Projects and Rural Welfare, National Extension Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.Venkataraman</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Industries Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Bakthavatsalam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.Subramaniam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Finance, Food and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.Manickavelu</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Land Revenue and Commercial Taxes and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Kakkan</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.Ramaiah</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lourdhammal Simon</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Local Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{102}\) *General Elections in Madras State 1957*, Election Data Analysis, (Public (Elections) Department, Government of Madras, 1960, TNA, Madras), pp.66-67

\(^{103}\) *Thi. Mu. Ka. Varalaaru (History of D.M.K)*, (Madras: Kazhagam Veliyeedu, 1973)

It can be noted that Kamaraj had been meticulous in selecting the portfolio to his cabinet ministers according to their expertise and capabilities for the best results and he had also increased the portfolio for himself. This could be interpreted as both taking up more responsibilities and also reducing the work load for his cabinet that had the least size in the whole of Indian States at that point in time. His second cabinet had a women minister too.

Nehru Unveiled Kamaraj Statue

On October 10, 1961, Nehru unveiled Kamaraj’s statue near Gymkhana Club, Mount Road at Chennai. Nehru stated that he had a policy not to unveil statues for living personalities but he exempted Kamaraj since he was undoubtedly more than a usual living person. He further continued that Kamaraj was more than a friend and leader of the masses and had determination and dedication to fulfill the needs of people in the State beyond his resources.

Third Cabinet - 1962

Kamaraj was re-elected from Sattur Constituency in 1962 General Elections. Kamaraj had secured 56% of the total votes polled.

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105 Makkal Thalaivar Kamaraj (Kamaraj – Leader of the People), (Chennai: Paari Nilayam, 1963), p.37.
106 C.D.Sankaranarayanan, Perunthalaivar Kamarajarin Vazhvum Thondum (Life and Contributions of Kamaraj), (Chennai: Mullai Nilayam, 2000), p.74
Table No. 3 - Poll details for Sattur Constituency – General Assembly Elections (1962)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Electorate</th>
<th>101,991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Poll</td>
<td>89,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Kamaraj (Congress Party)</td>
<td>49,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Ramamoorthy (Swatantra Party)</td>
<td>33,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramasamy Reddiyar (Independent)</td>
<td>2,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid Votes</td>
<td>3,044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Congress had won and secured an absolute majority of 136 out of the total 206 Constituencies. Kamaraj’s new cabinet sworn in on the forenoon of March 15, 1962 and continued in office throughout the calendar year 1962.

The size of Kamaraj’s third cabinet ministry had been increased from seven ministers to eight, however, it was still the smallest cabinet in the country compared to other States, with some changes in the ministers and their key portfolio, as follows;  

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Table No. 4 - Portfolio details of Kamaraj’s Third Cabinet - 1962

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Cabinet Minister</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K.Kamaraj</td>
<td>Chief Minister in charge of Public, Planning and Development including Local Development Works, Women’s Welfare, Community Projects and Rural Welfare, National Extension Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.Venkataraman</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Land Revenue and Commercial Taxes and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Bakthavatsalam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Finance and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.Bhuvaraghan</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Publicity and Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Nallasenapathi Sarkarai mandradiar</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Co-operation and Forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Kakkan</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.Ramaiah</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Public Works and Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jothi Venkatachalam</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.M.Abdul Majid</td>
<td>Minister in charge of Local Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the smallest size of the cabinet it also had additional features in the structure. There were two Harijans, one women and a Muslim. Four members of the cabinet were new and the remaining was from the existed cabinet.

G. Boovaraghan, twenty-nine, was probably the youngest cabinet minister in the country. This structure shows the courage
Kamaraj had in the youth and also his interests to represent all groups of people in the cabinet.¹¹⁰

**KAMARAJ PLAN (K-PLAN)**

Despite the fact that Congress Party in Tamilnadu had won the majority and had secured two percent more poll compared to 1957 elections, another fact was that it had lost 13 seats in the Assembly. D.M.K Party under the leadership of C.N. Annadurai had emerged with 50 M.L.A.s while the Party in 1957 elections had managed to win only 15 Constituencies.

For 1962 elections, Kamaraj had intensified campaign in those 15 Constituencies which were with D.M.K. and successfully recovered 14 out of 15 Constituencies from D.M.K sparing one where the D.M.K.’s treasurer had retained the Constituency by a very small margin. However, D.M.K had managed to capture 49 new Constituencies and thus increased their share in the Assembly from 15 to 50.¹¹¹

Kamaraj realised that the masses were being attracted towards D.M.K despite the welfare measures Kamaraj Government had been executing for the people. He concluded that Congressmen had started to focus their energy and time towards the power and positions in the Government and thus the same had to be diverted to full-fledged people service in order to recover the Party from fall.


Kamaraj decided to resign from his position as Chief Minister, and thus to lead by example, to strengthen the Party. This idea of Kamaraj, those leaders in Congress who were holding power and office to resign their positions and return to strengthen the Party, was known as K-Plan.

Kamaraj, while speaking to reporters in 1963 at Hyderabad after getting approval from Nehru for the K-Plan, said that position and power should not be an asset to any specific individuals in the Party and thus retaining any positions for more than a decade could not be expected to confer any good on the Party. He further added that upon his resignation, he would visit every village in Tamilnadu to induct full time Congress Party workers who have faith and sincere interests in the Party in order to strengthen Party to the roots.

On August 12, 1963, Nehru declared in Delhi Legislative Members Meet that the plan by Kamaraj was extremely novel, unparalleled and revolutionary and no other Parties would even imagine such a scheme. He agreed that initially he had hesitations to accept Kamaraj’s proposal but later convinced after Kamaraj explained the details. He further confirmed the K-Plan, more than Tamilnadu, could strengthen the Party across India. He published the list of ministers in the Central Government and State Government Chief Ministers to resign, and return to strengthening the Party, on August 24, 1963.

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114 Navasakti, (Tamil Daily), July 17, 1963, p.3.
115 S.K. Swamy, Dhesathilagam Kamaraj (Kamaraj – An Identity of the Nation), (Chennai: Sekar Publications, 1965), p.56
116 Ibid., p.57
Table No. 5 - Central Cabinet Ministers renounced office by K-Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Central Minister</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lal Bahadur Shastri</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morarji Desai</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jegajeevan Ram</td>
<td>Postal Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.K. Patil</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopal Reddy</td>
<td>Radio and Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Mali</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. 6 – Chief Ministers renounced office by K-Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Chief Minister</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamaraj</td>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patnaik</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P. Gupta</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binodanandhja</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandlai</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kamaraj resigned on October 02, 1963. E.V. Ramasamy, the leader of D.K. sent a telegram to Kamaraj that the resignation was equivalent of suicide of people of Tamilnadu as well as Kamaraj himself.\(^\text{117}\) E.V.R had been consistently writing and campaigning in support of Kamaraj throughout the decade of Kamaraj’s Chief Ministership in Tamilnadu, though the principles of D.K. were not completely in line with Congress Party’s.\(^\text{118}\)

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PIVOTAL ROLE FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

After Kamaraj’s resignation, Bakthavatsalam succeeded Kamaraj as Chief Minister of Tamilnadu and his new ministry took office on October 02, 1963 in the afternoon.\textsuperscript{119}

When Kamaraj had expressed the K-Plan to Nehru, Nehru had expressed his wish of making Kamaraj as President of A.I.C.C. but Kamaraj had refused to accept citing that he needed to go back and strengthen the Party in Tamilnadu.\textsuperscript{120} However, after three months, Nehru managed to propose and elect Kamaraj as President of A.I.C.C. unanimously on January 01, 1964.\textsuperscript{121}

The 68\textsuperscript{th} Indian National Congress Conference was held on January 05, 1964 at Bhubaneshwar in Orissa.\textsuperscript{122} Kamaraj detailed in the conference on how Congress was responsible for fulfilling the basic needs of the people. During the session, Nehru suddenly fell ill and he was advised to take rest. This was the first time that the Congress session was carried on in the absence of Nehru after Independence.\textsuperscript{123} Nehru did not fully recover from his illness and after five months he passed away on May 27, 1964.\textsuperscript{124}

After the demise of Nehru, Gulzarilal Nanda was appointed as acting Prime Minister, as senior most member of the cabinet, by President Radhakrishnan.\textsuperscript{125} Kamaraj had Lalbahadur Shastri in mind

\textsuperscript{119} Legislative Measures, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.220
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Navasakthi}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} October 1963, p.2.
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{The Hindu}, January 8, 1964, p.1.
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{The Hindu}, May 28, 1964, p.1.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
as Prime Minister Candidate\textsuperscript{126} but Morarji Desai had also expressed his willingness to become Prime Minister. Kamaraj decided to choose the next Prime Minister unanimously without contest and Congress Working Committee (C.W.C.) authorised Kamaraj to facilitate in getting the consensus.\textsuperscript{127}

Kamaraj spoke to Morarji Desai about electing L.B. Shastri as Prime Minister and got his consent. Morarji was not quite happy about giving up but wanted to maintain discipline in the Party. Eventually, on June 02, 1964, L.B. Shastri’s candidature for Prime Minister was proposed by Gulzarilal Nanda and Morarji seconded it.\textsuperscript{128}

War between India and Pakistan broke out in 1965 and the whole attention of the country turned to win the war. Kamaraj and Shastri went to war front at Lahore to encourage the soldiers.\textsuperscript{129} The War came to an end after Tashkent Agreement. It was signed between Indian Prime Minister Shastri and President Ayub Khan of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{130}

Soon after the agreement, Shastri passed away on January 10, 1966 in a heart attack.\textsuperscript{131} After the demise of Shastri, there were five leaders, Morarji, Nanda, Chawan, Jegajeevan Ram and S.K. Patil, in the Congress Party interested in nominating themselves for the Prime Minister Candidature and each of them believed strongly that they were the best choice. However, Kamaraj had Indira Gandhi, daughter

\textsuperscript{126} Savi, 6th September 1987, p.19.
\textsuperscript{128} S. Gausalya, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.64
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{The Hindu}, December 10, 1965, p.1.
\textsuperscript{131} \textit{The Hindu}, December 11, 1965, p.1.
of Nehru, in his mind to propose for Prime Minister Candidature.\(^{132}\) Point to be noted here is that three of them, Morarji, Jegajeevan Ram and S.K.Patil, had been the ones resigned their respective cabinet ministries under K-Plan.

Upon Kamaraj’s announcement of India as his candidate, except Morarji, the others decided not to contest. Kamaraj, as once again he preferred the leadership to be elected unanimously, met Morarji and requested not to contest but he remained stubborn. Eventually on January 19, 1966, Indira Gandhi secured 355 votes against Morarji who had secured only 169 votes, just less than half of what Indira Gandhi had received.\(^{133}\) Kamaraj had once again decided and succeeded in choosing the two Prime Ministers of the country, after Nehru.

**FOREIGN TOURS**

Early in 1966, Kamaraj had been invited to visit USA, Europe and USSR by the respective country’s leaders. He could not accept as he had a significant role to play in deciding Prime Minister Candidate and to stabilise the process of election. Upon Indira Gandhi’s election as Prime Minister, after six months, Kamaraj was relieved and flew to Europe and USSR between July 22 and August 15 of 1966. He visited Kremlin, Stalingrad, Leningrad, and Moscow in the USSR. He was an unusual visitor to USSR since he was not a Communist leader. From USSR he flew to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia before returning to India. Apart from the


Europe and USSR trips, he had earlier visited Sri Lanka and Malaysia between 1950 and 1954.\textsuperscript{134}

**ASSASINATION ATTEMPT**

On 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1966, staunch Hindus and Jana Sangh members conducted a rally in front of Parliament, for passing anti cow-slaughter law.\textsuperscript{135} Kamaraj condemned this rally in his speech in Congress Working Committee meet on November 02, 1966. He also rejected any discussions regarding the issue in CWC.\textsuperscript{136}

Soon after, on November 07, 1966, massive rally was organised by Hindu movements in New Delhi under the leadership of Sankaracharyas.\textsuperscript{137} The demonstration grew violent and turned to damaging the properties. The crowd then moved to Kamaraj’s residence and set fire. Kamaraj was moved to Parliamentary Members Club and the fire was put out. By the time the Police arrived, the mob had disappeared.\textsuperscript{138}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} Ibid., p.86.
\item \textsuperscript{135} Personal interview with Vairavan, 26th April 1989, as quoted in S. Gausalya, *Op.cit.*, p.69.
\item \textsuperscript{137} *The Hindu*, November 8, 1966, p.1.
\end{itemize}
FALL OF KAMARAJ AND CONFLICTS WITH INDIRA GANDHI

In 1967 General Assembly Elections of Tamilnadu, Kamaraj lost his contest against D.M.K contestant P.Seenivasan, for Virudunagar Constituency, in a small margin. The details were as follows;\textsuperscript{139}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table No. 7 - Poll details for Virudunagar Constituency – General Assembly Elections (1967)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Electorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Poll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Kamaraj (Congress Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Seenivasan (D.M.K)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Periya Karuppan (Independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Palanisamy Nadar (Independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid Votes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D.M.K had secured 138 Constituencies out of the contested 173 Constituencies, an 80% success. Congress Party had secured only 50 out of contested 234 Constituencies, about 80% failure. In the Assembly, the strength of Congress was 21% and the D.M.K’s strength was 59%, others filled the remaining 20%.\textsuperscript{140}

The food scarcity in the State and poor management of the issue by Bakthavatsalam Government were generally the prime causes while attractive speeches and promises to fix food scarcity by D.M.K leaders were considered as the secondary causes by political

\textsuperscript{139} Who is Who, Madras Legislative Assembly, (Government of Madras, 1968), p.125.

experts, for the defeat of Congress Party. Kamaraj continued to be the President of A.I.C.C during this period.

By this time the relationship between Indira Gandhi and Kamaraj had gradually become rough due to many disagreements on the issues of devaluation of Rupee, Candidate selection for President Election, and cabinet ministers selection, etc.

Basically Kamaraj’s principle was to resolve conflicts by discussion in both at Party level and National level discussions and to strengthen the Party by consensus and thus creating singular voice in all the issues, but Indira Gandhi’s was the opposite. She exercised her power as Prime Minister and did not believe in consulting with Party leaders for any issues.

Indira Gandhi mentioned in one of the Party meetings that no person defeated in any of the Public elections was morally qualified to contest in Party elections since that individual had already lost the confidence of the Public. Kamaraj understood that Indira Gandhi’s comment was indirectly targeted at preventing Kamaraj’s re-election as Party president. He submitted his resignation from his position of President of A.I.C.C on December 07, 1967.

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After a year, Kamaraj contested for Member of Parliament from Nagercoil Parliamentary Constituency and won the by-election on January 08, 1969.\textsuperscript{144} The details of that election results were as follows;\textsuperscript{145}

\textbf{Table No. 8 - Poll details for Nagercoil Parliamentary Constituency –
By-elections (1969)}

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
Total Electorate & 505,976 \\
\hline
Total Poll & 401,600 \\
\hline
K.Kamaraj (Congress Party) & 249,437 \\
\hline
M.Mathias (Swatantra Party) & 121,236 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

In the same year Kamaraj’s mother passed away.\textsuperscript{146} Indira Gandhi, upon Kamaraj’s election as Member of Parliament, expressed her wish to make Kamaraj as a cabinet minister but he refused to accept the offer. He supported the A.I.C.C President Nijalingappa and was against Indira Gandhi on almost all decisions.\textsuperscript{147}

In late 1969, half of the Congress Working Committee Members adopted a resolution seeking to expel Indira Gandhi from primary membership of the Party, for violation of the Party discipline, and asked for election of new leader to represent Congress Party in the Parliament.\textsuperscript{148} As a counter attack, Indira Gandhi declared that A.I.C.C presided over by herself and removed Nijalingappa from President. Both groups, Congress (O) under the leadership of

\textsuperscript{144} Dinamalar (Tamil Daily), January 9, 1969, p.3.
\textsuperscript{145} The Hindu, January 10, 1969, p.1.
\textsuperscript{147} The Hindu, November 23, 1969, p.1.
Kamaraj and Morarji and Congress (R) under Indira Gandhi conducted meetings separately, each group expelling the other from the Party.\footnote{The Hindu, November 23, 1969, p.1.}

The split in the Congress Party had been completed by December 1969. 446 out of 705 members of A.I.C.C had walked over to Indira Gandhi’s side\footnote{Chandra, Bipan & others, India after Independence 1947-2000, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2000), p.236} and thus the Congress (R) was recognised as real Indian National Congress by the Election Commission of India.

In 1971, Kamaraj was elected as Member of Parliament again from Nagercoil Constituency, but this time as a candidate from Congress (O), by securing 215,324 votes against his opponent M.C.Balan from D.M.K who had managed 114,771 votes.\footnote{M.S. Muthuswamy, Op.cit., p.234} This was the last ever election Kamaraj contested and remained an M.P of Nagercoil Constituency until his death.

In 1975, Allahabad High Court issued its verdict on June 12 that the election of Indira Gandhi from Rae Barelli Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh, was invalid as she had used Government machinery for election campaign\footnote{The Hindu, June 13, 1975, p.1.}.

Morarji Desai and Jaya Prakash Narayan announced that Indira Gandhi should step down but she did not resign and continued to get stay orders from the Court on the technical grounds. So leaders
like Jaya Prakash Narayan called for internal civil disobedience. Subsequently, shortly before midnight on June 26, 1975, a national emergency was proclaimed by President of India Fakrudin Ali Ahmed on the basis of advice from Indira Gandhi on the grounds of security of India was threatened by internal disturbances.

Many leaders including Jaya Prakash Narayan, Morarji and Charan Singh were arrested under preventive detention but Kamaraj was not arrested. All the media were censored. Kamaraj was greatly disappointed by this move from Indira Gandhi and felt heartbroken as Indira Gandhi was originally his choice for Prime Minister, almost a decade ago, in 1966.

Kamaraj expected the Emergency to last only for brief period but the subsequent arrests of Congress leader Acharya Kripalani had let him to lose hope on the lift of Emergency. His health worsened during this period with acute fever, blood pressure and blood sugar. When his health condition showed some improvements, Kamaraj celebrated his 73rd birthday, as simple as he could, on July 15, 1975. He was completely disturbed by the declaration of Emergency and mostly contained himself at home. On October 02, 1975, on the birthday of Gandhi, Kamaraj passed away in a heart attack at his home on 3.15P.M.

In 1976, Bharat Ratna (Gem of India), the highest civilian honor of India for exceptional service towards Art, Literature,
Science and recognition of Public Service, was conferred on him posthumously. The suggestion, for awarding Bharat Ratna to Kamaraj, had been given by Indira Gandhi to the President of India.

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